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1-23-2007 School Committee Minutes

THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2007
7:30 PM

Present: Sue Sheffler, Chair
Susan Lovelace, Vice Chair
Paul Schlichtman, Secretary
Sean Garballey
Jeff Thielman
Martin Thrope
Kathy Fennelly

Superintendent: Nate Levenson
Asst. Supt.: Kevin Hutchinson
Chief Financial Off: Sue Mazzarella
Sp. Ed. Director: Barbara Cataldo
Student Reps: Sean Conroy and Ella Hartenian

Call to order: 7:40 pm

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Joanne Contardo, who resides at 12 Valley Road with her husband and son, addressed the committee regarding the ASA Exchange Students they have hosted for the past 12 years. These students have attended AHS without paying tuition. Joanne also stated any family member who could reside at this address would be able to attend AHS without paying tuition.

Gordon Jamieson, Co-Chair of the Arlington Recycling Committee addressed the committee about having the Arlington Public Schools find space at each of the elementary schools for recycling bins. He mentioned a company from Canada that would maintain all aspects of the bins. He also stated any income would go to the Arlington PTO Thrift shop.

CONSENT AGENDA – all items listed with an asterisk (*) are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the Committee so requests, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence.

- *Approval of Warrant 07096 in the amount of \$1,189,932.67
- *2nd reading of Policy BDAA Election of School Committee Officers
- *Approval of Minutes: October 24, 2006, November 14 & 28, 2006, December 12, 2006

On a motion by Ms. Lovelace, seconded by Mr. Schlichtman, it was voted to pull BDAA, minutes from December 12, 2006. Warrant 07096 and the minutes of: October 24, 2006, November 14 & 28, 2006 were approved.
Unanimous vote 7-0.

On a motion Mr. Schlichtman, seconded by Mr. Thielman, it was voted to have the minutes from the December 12, 2006 be corrected to show that the Student Rep attending was not Sean Conroy, it was in fact Ella Hartenian.
Unanimous vote 7-0

READING UPDATE

A reading update was giving by the reading coaches, **Linda Hanson, Evelyn DeRosa and Marie Janiak**. The presentation included handouts and an overhead presentation of key program elements of 06/07.
All seven elementary schools have completed first round of assessments and reading intervention services according the three-

tier model. All data will be stored on uniform spreadsheets that exist on servers at all the elementary schools. A mid year reading assessment will be completed and recorded on the uniform spreadsheets by February 9. This will track the progress of students reading below grade level and to see how students are progressing. This will determine which students will receive reading intervention services for round 2.

The progress of this program is much appreciated by teachers, parents and the students themselves. They all like the consistency of daily intervention from trained staff; the data that is kept on each student and that this is not a whole year program. The students who have not received services in round 1 might be able to get them in round 2 of the program.

Supt. Levenson reported the collective efforts of all principals, reading coaches, reading teachers, specialist and classroom teachers working together to review the data makes this a district wide success.

SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATE

BJ Cataldo acknowledged with the collaboration of staff, the special education department over the past eighteen months out of the 193 items the DOE requires, there are only 7 very small pieces left to give to the DOE. Timelines have clearly improved and the staff has set up the foundation for regular ed and special ed to work together to discuss inclusion, accommodations, and modifications. The PAC group is instrumental to the success of this department and the programs that are planned have been well received.

Nancy Campbell, the Out of District Coordinator, and **Elette DiPietro**, the In District Coordinator for Special Education gave an update of special education programs. The handout explained each program and at what grade level these programs are being offered.

It was clear from the discussion that special education has a lot of programs, but some of these are now stretched. Ms. Campbell raised the issue to see if any of these programs need to be changed to accommodate appropriate students. A place to start was development of programs at the elementary level with students that are more disabled k-5. Ms. DiPietro stressed the need for development of programs and that the infrastructure last over time. This will be an investment that would allow our current staff professional development for regular ed and special ed to provide services to keep our children in town.

BREAK

THE CONCEPT OF A DIVERSION PROGRAM

Supt. Levenson wanted to share with the Committee information that he has been working on for over a year the concept of a diversion program with Mr. Skidmore, Police Chief Ryan, Ms. Bouvier and the Youth, Health and Safety Coalition.

This program is in its development stage. The concept would be for first time non-violent offenders and their families' to be diverted from criminal prosecution in a structured and consistent manner. Chief Ryan stressed he would like to see more structure and consistency with dealing with minors and offenders, within his own department. He would like to hold the youngsters accountable and provide an incentive to have the youths make good decisions.

A diversion program might look like:

- Youth enters into a contract,
- Youth agrees to substance abuse counseling or other counseling
- Youth agrees to community service
- Youth agrees not to re offend
- any other community base program to help to the youth to not re offend again
-

The DA offers a program but not on school offenses, and Arlington could create their own community-based program.

On a motion Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Fennelly it was

Voted to have the superintendent work with the Police Department on a diversion program and report back to the committee on a plan by June 30, 2007

Unanimous vote 7-0.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

On a motion Mr. Thielman, seconded by Ms. Sheffler, it was

voted to place the four Holder Warrant articles on the town warrant

Unanimous vote 7-0.

On a motion Ms. Sheffler, seconded by Ms. Fennelly, it was

voted to reauthorize the Special Ed Revolving Fund on town warrant

Unanimous vote 7-0.

Kevin O'Brien from Planning Department sent a Smart Growth Survey and asked members of the School Committee to complete this regarding long term planning. Ms. Sheffler stated that Mr. O'Brien will be at the February 13, 2007 School Committee meeting to follow up on survey results.

Supt. Levenson was thrilled to announce next year the Arlington Public Schools will expand on childcare coverage for staff. The program will move from the Hardy School and relocate to the Stratton School.. The space at the Stratton will be first-rate facility for childcare. Taxpayers do not need to worry because there will be no cost to the district. This new space will triple the amount of children and expand the age range for childcare. This is a school-based program, which is cost effective and convenient to

have childcare within the district for the staff.

Supt. Levenson reported on the status of the Arlington Public Schools FY 07 Budget Summary and Budget Update. This report outlined the needs that have to be changed and to implement new procedures.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Lovelace reminded everyone on the Budget Subcommittee Public Forum would be held on Monday, January 29, 2007 from 7-9 p.m. Ms. Lovelace mentioned that someone from the Budget subcommittee would be willing to come to each school PTO meeting to discuss this matter as well.

The subcommittee referred to looking at last year's budget issues for the full committee. The full committee requested the subcommittee to collect data on nurses and find out what is needed in the district. The entire subcommittee will present this data to the full committee on Tuesday March 13, 2007

On a motion Ms. Lovelace, seconded by Mr. Schlichtman, it was voted that if the district is to charge a fee for an exchange student, then it should be set at the average total cost per pupil as defined by the sum of fees, grants, and operating revenue as included in the annual budget.
Unanimous vote 7-0.

Mr. Garballey chair of Policy and Procedure subcommittee will discuss this issue and set up a meeting

On a motion Mr. Thrope, seconded by Mr. Garballey, it was voted to move the approval of the 2nd reading of the amended BDAA with the addition of the 5th paragraph of BDAA which was underlined.

Vote 3 yes and 3 no and 1 abstention by Ms. Lovelace, the motion fails

Mr. Schlichtman announced the next Community Relations Subcommittee meeting February 6, 2007.
Also noted was the donation of the new scoreboard from Mr. Bill Armstrong.

On a motion Ms. Schlichtman, seconded by Ms. Fennelly, it was voted to have the committee vote to recommend that the school committee nominate Bill Armstrong for the MASC Friends of Public Education award.
Unanimous vote 7-0

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Student rep: Sean Conroy, who is also president of AHS SAVE Club mentioned an upcoming event as part of Earth Week during the week of January 29, 2007. AHS Students Against Violating the Environment (SAVE) will be holding two assemblies for the Senior and Junior classes on Al Gore's documentary, An Inconvenient Truth.

Student Rep: Ella Hartenian is a member of Stand Club and has credited the co- presidents and Mr. Paul McKnight who is the advisor of the Stand Club, of hosting a successful battle of the bands event. The Stand Club had raised \$3,700.

Mr. Schlichtman presented correspondence from Mr. Richard Russo of 170 Crosby Street, regarding his proposal to require the details of school events and instruction material that may be incompatible or in conflict with the reasonable religious or moral beliefs of parents be submitted to the school committee for review and approval prior to scheduling or use in the schools.

On a motion Ms. Thrope, seconded by Mr. Thielman, it was voted to move Mr. Russo's letter to the Policy & Procedures Subcommittee
6 in favor and 1 abstention by Mr. Schlichtman, motion pass

Ms. Fennelly noted the Curriculum and Instruction would meet on Monday January 29, 2007 at 5 pm to discuss special ed issues and special ed and regular ed overlap and a preview of the changes to the handbook.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Fennelly would also like to recommend that the School Committee read "Good to Great" and have this be the discussion at the next School Committee retreat.

ADJOURN

On a motion Ms. Lovelace, seconded by Ms. Fennelly, it was voted to adjourn @ 11:05 pm 7-0

*Submitted by
Karen Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant to the School Committee*